

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing authentication, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving an identity claim;

determining a target discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one target model relating to a target individual;

determining a background discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one background model relating to at least one background individual, wherein said step of determining the background discriminant comprises providing a background profile and further determining the background discriminant based on the background profile as a target-dependent function of individual voiceprint-based discriminants in the background profile;

determining a score based on the target discriminant and the background discriminant; and

accepting or rejecting the identity claim based on the determined score.

2. (Cancelled)

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3. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein said step of providing a background profile comprises:

determining a permutation matrix;

determining a weight vector; and

determining the background profile based on the permutation matrix and the weight vector.

4. (Original) The method according to Claim 3, wherein said step of determining the weight vector comprises selecting a weight graph that relates the individual background discriminant functions to at least one characteristic associated with the at least one target voiceprint model.

5. (Original) The method according to Claim 3, wherein said step of providing the background profile comprises providing the background profile automatically.

6. (Original) The method according to Claim 5, wherein said step of determining the permutation matrix comprises providing the permutation matrix as the identity matrix.

7. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

providing a plurality of background population models; and

ascertaining individual discriminants in correspondence with each of the background population models;

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said step of determining the background discriminant comprising determining the background discriminant as a function of the individual discriminants.

8. (Original) The method according to Claim 7, wherein said step of determining the background discriminant comprises determining the background discriminant as a function, of the individual discriminants corresponding to each of the background population models, that is dependent on at least one characteristic relating to the target individual.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of providing speech-based authentication, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving an identity claim;

determining a target discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one target voiceprint model relating to a target speaker;

determining a background discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one background voiceprint model relating to at least one background speaker, wherein said step of determining the background discriminant comprises providing a background profile and further determining the background discriminant based on the background profile as a target-dependent function of individual voiceprint-based discriminants in the background profile;

determining a score based on the target discriminant and the background discriminant; and

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accepting or rejecting the identity claim based on the determined score.

10. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus for providing authentication, said apparatus comprising:

a receiving arrangement which receives an identity claim;

a target discriminant generator which determines a target discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one target model relating to a target individual;

a background discriminant generator which determines a background discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one background model relating to at least one background individual, wherein said step of determining the background discriminant comprises providing a background profile and further determining the background discriminant based on the background profile as a target-dependent function of individual voiceprint-based discriminants in the background profile; and

a decision arrangement which determines a score based on the target discriminant and the background discriminant, and accepts or rejects the identity claim based on the determined score.

11. **(Cancelled)**

12. **(Original)** The apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein said background discriminant generator is further adapted to:

determine a permutation matrix;

determine a weight vector; and

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determine the background profile based on the permutation matrix and the weight vector.

13. **(Original)** The apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein said background discriminant generator is adapted to determine the weight vector via selecting a weight graph that relates the individual background discriminant functions to at least one characteristic associated with the at least one target model.

14. **(Original)** The apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein said background discriminant generator is adapted to provide the background profile automatically.

15. **(Original)** The apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein said background discriminant generator is adapted to provide the permutation matrix as the identity matrix.

16. **(Original)** The apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein:

the at least one background population voiceprint model comprises a plurality of background population models; and

said background discriminant generator is adapted to:

ascertain individual discriminants in correspondence with each of the background population models; and

determine the background discriminant as a function of the individual discriminants.

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17. **(Original)** The apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein said background discriminant generator is further adapted to determine the background discriminant as a function, of the individual discriminants corresponding to each of the background population models, that is dependent on at least one characteristic relating to the target speaker.

18. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus for providing speech-based authentication, said apparatus comprising:

a receiving arrangement which receives an identity claim;

a target discriminant generator which determines a target discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one target voiceprint model relating to a target speaker;

a background discriminant generator which determines a background discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one background voiceprint model relating to at least one background speaker, wherein said step of determining the background discriminant comprises providing a background profile and further determining the background discriminant based on the background profile as a target-dependent function of individual voiceprint-based discriminants in the background profile; and

a decision arrangement which determines a score based on the target discriminant and the background discriminant, and accepts or rejects the identity claim based on the determined score.

19. **(Currently Amended)** A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform

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method steps for providing authentication, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving an identity claim;

determining a target discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one target voiceprint model relating to a target individual;

determining a background discriminant based on the identity claim and on at least one background model relating to at least one background individual, wherein said step of determining the background discriminant comprises providing a background profile and further determining the background discriminant based on the background profile as a target-dependent function of individual voiceprint-based discriminants in the background profile;

determining a score based on the target discriminant and the background discriminant; and

accepting or rejecting the identity claim based on the determined score.